

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Media Alert for Theatre Editors, Reviewers and Calendar Listings

**Chance Theater proudly presents the Southern California Premiere of**  
***in a word***

**Lauren Yee's award-winning exploration of grief and word choice starts September 8  
at Chance Theater @ Bette Aitken *theater arts* Center on the Fyda-Mar Stage**

May 10, 2017 ... Anaheim, California ... Chance Theater, Anaheim's official resident theater company, is pleased to announce the fourth show in our 19th Anniversary Season: the Southern California premiere of... ***in a word***. Written by Lauren Yee and directed by Jocelyn A. Brown, ***in a word* will preview from September 8 through September 15; regular performances will begin September 16 and continue through October 8 at Chance Theater @ Bette Aitken *theater arts* Center on the intimate Fyda-Mar Stage.**

Having just won the Francesca Primus Prize, ***in a word*** starts on the two-year anniversary of Fiona's son's disappearance, and still, nothing makes sense to her. Not her blasé husband, the incompetent detective, or the neighborhood kidnapper who keeps introducing himself in the checkout line. As Fiona delves back into her memories of that fateful day, to uncover that crucial missing piece, grief and comedy collide, and ordinary turns of phrase take on dangerous new meanings.

"This is a complex and arresting journey..." – *Cleveland Scene*

"It's a theatrical punch to the gut that will leave audiences breathless" – *Chicago Theater Review*

"I think the play is a lyrical, absurdly funny meditation on loss and grief and narrative," said playwright Lauren Yee. "I was more interested in trying to give the audience a sense of what it's like to move through grief and trauma in a theatrical way. When you're in a traffic accident or you've heard some terrible news, the world around you begins to move differently and each interaction you have that day is colored by those events, even though nobody around you may know what's happened. Everything begins to take on significance, and you see clues and reminders everywhere. That's the territory that ***in a word*** covers."

In an official statement after awarding ***in a word*** with the Francesca Primus Prize, the American Theatre Critics Association and the Francesca Ronnie Primus Foundation said, "What makes ***in a word*** so remarkable is the imaginative and unique way Yee plays with language. Words and their meanings become fluid and either merge or collide with one another."

"Throughout the play, you have Fiona desperately trying to use the correct words to describe what's going on in her life in a way that she thinks an audience will find palatable," Yee continues. "And it's only when she is able to do that in more truthful (and a little bit uglier) words that she's able to exorcise some of those demons... Dealing with words so

closely seemed really appropriate for this play, in which we're introduced to a couple that hasn't been able to talk to each other for two years directly about what went on."

*in a word* evolved through a series of readings from 2010 to 2014 at theaters such as Williamstown Theatre Festival in Massachusetts, Lincoln Center's LCT3 in New York City, and the Boston Court Theatre in Pasadena. It first debuted at the San Francisco Playhouse in 2015 as a National New Play Network Rolling World Premiere and has had subsequent productions in various theaters across the nation.

## MEET THE TEAM

**Lauren Yee (Playwright)** is a playwright born and raised in San Francisco. She was a Dramatists Guild fellow, a MacDowell fellow, a MAP Fund grantee, and a member of The Public Theater's Emerging Writers Group. Her play *Samsara* has been a nominee for the Susan Smith Blackburn Prize and the L. Arnold Weissberger Award. Her full-length work has been produced at AlterTheater, Artists at Play, City Lights Theatre Company, Company One, fu-GEN, the Hub Theatre, Impact Theatre, Moxie Theatre, Mu Performing Arts, Pan Asian Rep, SIS Productions, and others. Lauren's work has also been developed at Lincoln Center Theatre/LCT3, the Goodman Theatre, The Public Theater, Rattlestick Playwrights Theatre, Playwrights Realm, Second Stage Theatre, Centerstage, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Aurora Theatre, the Bay Area Playwrights Festival, East West Players, the Hangar Theatre, Kitchen Dog Theatre, the Magic Theatre, Orlando Shakespeare Festival, PlayPenn, and the Playwrights' Center. Her play *The Hatmaker's Wife* was an Outer Critics Circle nominee for the John Gassner Award for best play by a new American playwright. *Ching Chong Chinaman* was picked as a top 10 play of the year by *City Pages* and the *East Bay Express*, and *Crevice* was a Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle nominee for Best Play. Lauren is a Time Warner Fellow at the Women's Project Playwrights Lab and a member of the Ma-Yi Theatre Writers Lab, as well as the Shank playwright-in-residence at Second Stage Theatre and the Page One resident playwright at Playwrights Realm. She is currently under commission from the Goodman Theatre, Lincoln Center Theatre/LCT3, Mixed Blood Theatre, Encore Theatre Company (with support from the Gerbode Foundation), and TheatreworksUSA, a theater for young audiences.

**Jocelyn A. Brown (Director)** has been a resident artist since 2001 and has been serving as the Associate Artistic Director since 2011. Chance highlights include directing last season's So Cal premiere of *The Big Meal*, spearheading and directing various new works through Chance's On The Radar series for four years, writing and performing in *A Celtic Holiday with Craic in the Stone* (Best Special Event, Best of OC Theater 2014 by *Examiner.com*), portraying Reggie Fluty and Dave O'Malley in *The Laramie Project* and *Ten Years Later* (Ovation Recommended), directing *Evita* (Chancie Award for Best Production), portraying Blitzen in *The Eight: Reindeer Monologues*, the Witch in *Into the Woods* (*Back Stage* Critic's Pick, Chancie Award for Best Actress), Cathy in *The Last 5 Years* (*Back Stage* Honorable Mention for Actor), directing *Never In My Lifetime* (*Back Stage* Critic's Pick), portraying Nancy in *Closer Than Ever* (*L.A. Times* Critic's Choice), Ann in *Goodnight Children Everywhere* (*OC Weekly* Award for Best Acting), directing *The Cherry Orchard* (*OC Weekly* nomination for Best Direction), and receiving the Outstanding Individual Artist nomination in 2003 by Arts Orange County. Outside of the Chance, Jocelyn teaches at Laguna Hills High School where she was an honoree for the California League of High Schools "Teacher of the Year" in 2012 for Orange County and served as the band leader and lead singer for Celtic folk band Craic in the Stone. Jocelyn double majored in Theatre and Biology at the University of California San Diego, studied theater abroad at the University of East Anglia in England, and earned a Masters in Education from Vanguard University.

The production team for *in a word* also includes scenic designer Christopher Scott Murillo (*Dogfight*, *Samsara*), and stage manager Lindsay Marsh (*Fancy Nancy*).

Rachelle Menaker and Eddie Schuller are the Executive Producers, and Steve Brown is the Associate Producer. Bette & Wylie Aitken are the Season Producers for the entire 2017 production schedule.

To schedule press interviews, request photos, schedule press comps or for any additional information, please contact Casey Long at (714) 900-3284 or by e-mail at [casey@chancetheater.com](mailto:casey@chancetheater.com).

## ABOUT CHANCE THEATER

Proud to be one of the leading ensemble-driven theatre companies in Southern California, CHANCE THEATER recently received a National Theatre Company grant from American Theatre Wing. The Chance has won six Ovation Awards, including two for Best Production of a Musical – Intimate Theater for its West Coast premiere of *Triassic Park – The Musical* and Southern California premiere of *Jerry Springer – The Opera*, as well as four LADCC Awards, including the Polly Warfield Award for Outstanding Season. The Anaheim City Council named Chance Theater “the official resident theater company of Anaheim”, and Arts Orange County has twice named the Chance as “Outstanding Arts Organization”. Known for using bold and personal storytelling to promote dialogue and connection within the Southern California theatrical landscape, the Chance is committed to contributing to a more compassionate, connected and creative community. As a constituent member of Theatre Communications Group, Network of Ensemble Theaters, and the LA Stage Alliance, Chance Theater continues to bring national attention to the Southern California and Orange County theater scenes.

## CALENDAR LISTING

### WHAT: **IN A WORD**

Today is the two-year anniversary of Fiona’s son’s disappearance, and still, nothing makes sense to her. Not her blasé husband, the incompetent detective, or the neighborhood kidnapper who keeps introducing himself in the checkout line. As Fiona delves back into her memories of that fateful day, to uncover that crucial missing piece, grief and comedy collide, and ordinary turns of phrase take on dangerous new meanings.

### WHEN:

#### **Preview Performances:**

September 08 - 15, 2017

Fridays at 7:45pm

Saturday at 7:45 pm

Sunday at 7:45pm

#### **Regular Performances**

September 16 - October 08, 2017

Fridays at 7:45pm

Saturdays at 7:45pm

Sundays at 2:45pm

WHERE: Chance Theater @ Bette Aitken *theater arts* Center on the Fyda-Mar Stage  
5522 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807

TICKETS: \$21.00 - \$35.00. Call (888) 455-4212 or visit [www.ChanceTheater.com](http://www.ChanceTheater.com).  
Discounts available for seniors, students and military.

**REVIEWERS and OTHER PRESS are encouraged to attend:**

**Press Preview on Friday, September 15 at 7:45pm**

###